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26 July 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Cord Meyer

SUBJECT: Duties and Suggestions

Cord:

1. In your post as Special Assistant to me, I would like you to spend at least the next six months--longer if necessary--concentrating on the Agency's role and responsibilities with regard to strategic warning and crisis management. I am concerned that we in CIA are not devoting maximum attention to the strategic warning problem, a problem which is basic to intelligence responsibilities to guard against surprise hostilities that endanger the U.S. or its treaty allies.

2. We have a very small staff element operating in the Pentagon. A handful of CIA officers are assigned to that staff known as the Strategic Warning Staff. Representatives from elsewhere in the Community are also assigned. The DCI's Special Assistant for Strategic Warning is [redacted] of DIA.

3. I am concerned that there is no central point in CIA fully charged with full-time attention to strategic warning and that our collection and analytical capability are not as well oriented as they should be to this special concern.

4. Related to the warning problem is that of crisis management. The Washington Special Action Group (WSAG) is the Government's focal point for crisis management. It operates on behalf of the National Security Council. The DCI is a member. For its part during crises, the Agency establishes task forces that operate in the Operations Center. It is of vital importance that the task force have in its possession not only foreign intelligence pertaining to the crisis but information concerning our own friendly moves and reactions as well. Proper intelligence assessments of crisis developments can only take place with the marriage of friendly and hostile information. In the Community there has been a tendency for each agency to go its own way during times of crises. This is confusing to crisis managers and is not helpful to the DCI. He should be made able to concert the entire Community with the CIA as its nucleus.

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5. I ask that you give close study to our organizational and procedural arrangements relating to warning and crisis management to see what improvements may be necessary.

6. To that end, you should confer with any or all parts of the Agency and with others in the Community, and in the policy end too. Among those you will find helpful to consult with will be the Chief and Deputy Chief of the CIA Operations Center; the DDS&T and the Director of ORD where some research is taking place in the warning area; the Director/OCI who is responsible for establishing crisis task forces; the head of the Strategic Warning Staff (be sure to get yourself on distribution for all SWS reporting); General Faurer; the Director of DIA who has very special and interesting views particularly about crisis management; and [] of the IC Staff who has developed sound philosophies concerning warning and crisis management. In addition to these, there are three individuals who have made a career in your study. One is [] now retired; another is [] an OCI officer; another is [] a DIA officer assigned to the Strategic Warning Staff.

[]
E. H. Knoche
DDCI

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